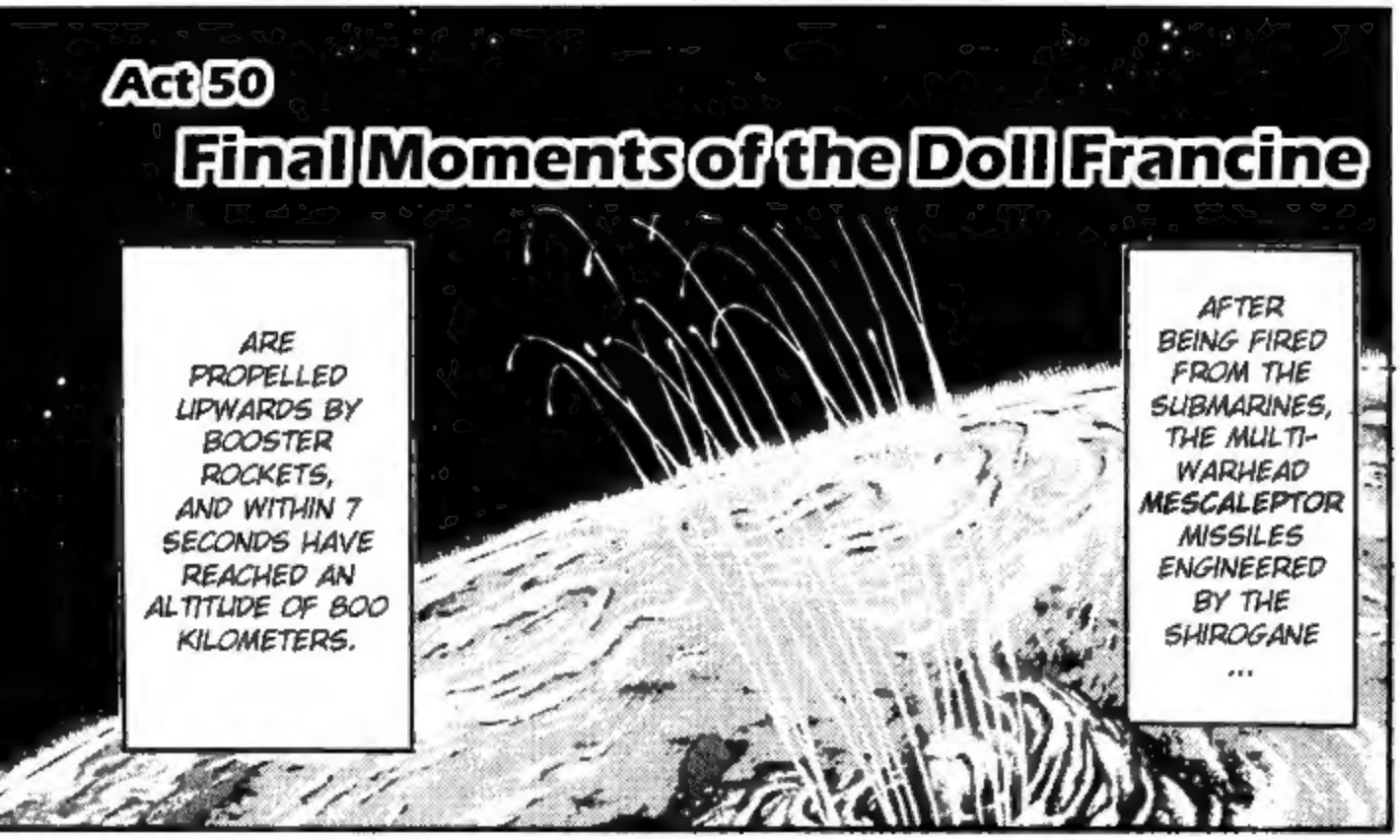
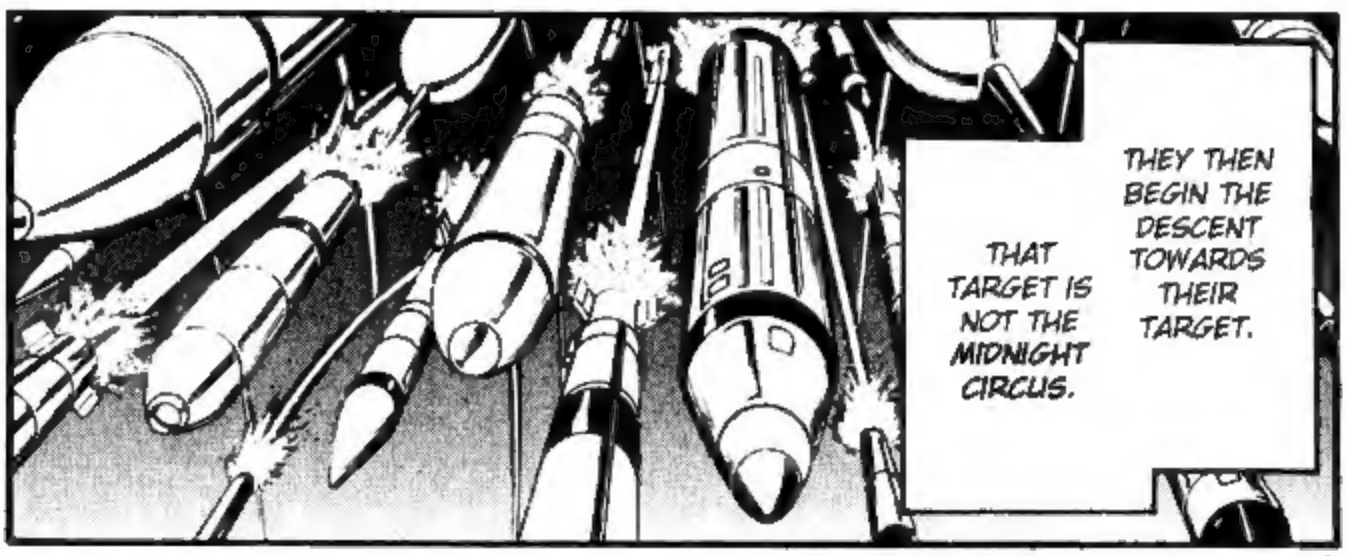
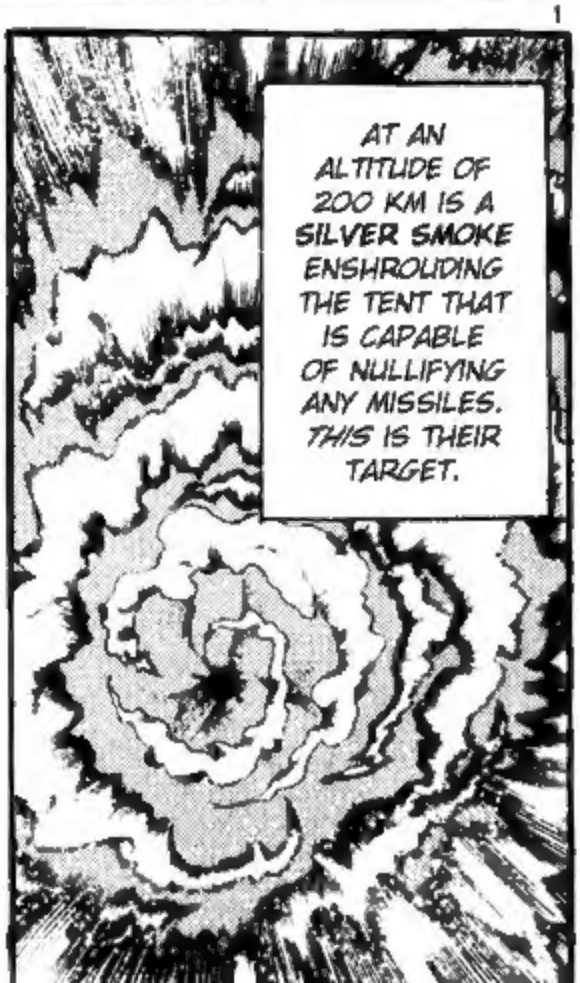
Act 50
Final Moments of the Doll Francine

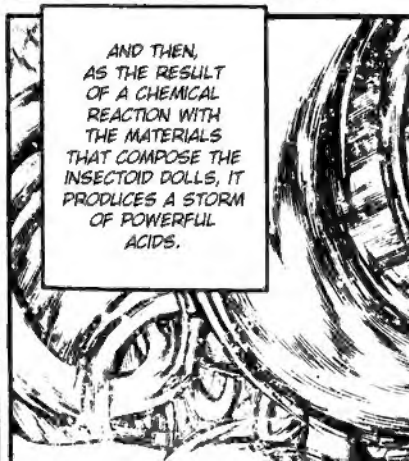

ARE PROPELLED UPWARDS BY BOOSTER ROCKETS, AND WITHIN 7 SECONDS HAVE REACHED AN ALTITUDE OF 800 KILOMETERS.
AFTER BEING FIRED FROM THE SUBMARINES, THE MULTI-WARHEAD MESCALEPTOR MISSILES ENGINEERED BY THE SHIROGANE ...



MESCALEPTOR IS A VISCOUS AND HIGHLY CORROSIVE AGENT. BY THE TIME IT REACHES AN ALTITUDE OF 200 KM, THIS SUBSTANCE, HAVING PERMEATED THE ATMOSPHERE...


AT AN ALTITUDE OF 200 KM IS A SILVER SMOKE ENSHROUDING THE TENT THAT IS CAPABLE OF NULLIFYING ANY MISSILES. THIS IS THEIR TARGET.

第50幕 フランシーヌ人形の最期

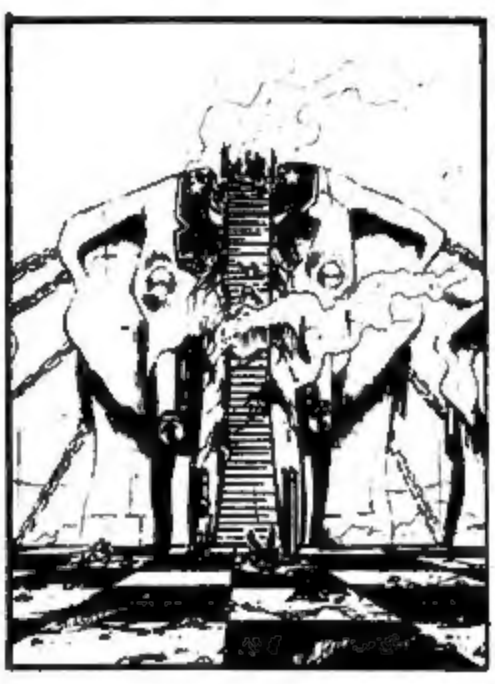


ゴオオオオオオ
IT LOOKS LIKE...
THE ATTACK'S STARTED.
SEVERAL MORE WILL COME. THEY'LL GO ON UNTIL ALL OF THE SILVER SMOKE HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM THE ATMOSPHERE.
AND THEN THE REAL ONSLAUGHT WILL BEGIN ...

ONCE MING-HAI DESTROYS THE DOLL FRANCINE, ALL OF THIS WILL BE OVER.
THAT'S ALL I NEED.

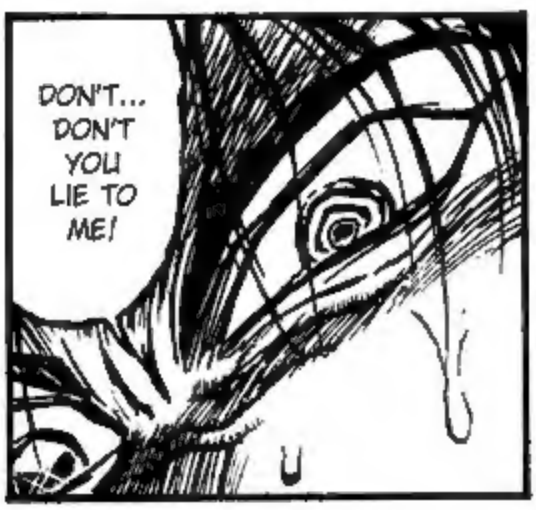
I'M SORRY, MING-XIA. YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT UP IN ALL OF THIS EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE NOT A SHIRO-GANE...
DON'T BE SILLY, ROCKEN-FIELD. THIS WAS MY DECISION. I'M READY FOR IT.

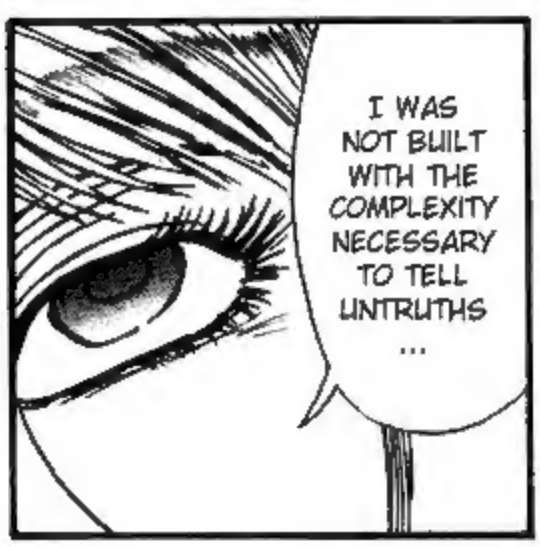
WHAT ...



オオオ
WHAT DID YOU SAY?

5


DON'T... DON'T YOU LIE TO ME!


I WAS NOT BUILT WITH THE COMPLEXITY NECESSARY TO TELL UNTRUTHS ...

I WAS ...
BUILT BY LADY FRANCINE 90 YEARS AGO.
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY, DOLL FRANCINE?!

AND ...
EVEN NOW, I CAN RECALL THE DAY I WAS BUILT.
AND DISAPPEARED FROM THIS TENT...
THAT NIGHT WHEN LADY FRANCINE TRANSFERRED THIS ROLE TO ME...

ゴオオオ

IF YOU PLEASE.
OPEN YOUR EYES ...

FROM NOW ON, YOUR NAME SHALL BE FRANCINE.

SFX: CREAKING

EVERY ONE OF THEM ADORES ME, REVERES ME...
THEY TRY SO MANY DIFFERENT METHODS TO MAKE ME SMILE.
BECAUSE I BUILT THEM TO DO SO.
MY MASTER, BY WHOM I MYSELF WAS BUILT, HATED ME FOR BEING UNABLE TO SMILE, AND ABANDONED ME.
AND SO, HOPING THAT I WOULD GAIN THE ABILITY TO SMILE, I ENTRUSTED THAT DUTY TO THEM.
HOW-EVER ...
MY BODY HAS GROWN SLOWER OF LATE ...
AS HAVE MY THOU-GHTS ...
NO MATTER WHERE WE TRAVEL, MY CREATOR IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.
AND NO MATTER HOW MUCH SUFFERING I WATCH THE AUTOMATA VISIT UPON HUMANS...
I REMAIN UNABLE TO SMILE.
PER-HAPS THIS IS...
WHAT HUMANS CALL GROWING TIRED.

I...
HAVE DECIDED TO EXTINGUISH MYSELF FROM THIS WORLD.
THE DAY WILL MOST LIKELY COME WHEN YOU UNDERSTAND FOR YOURSELF.
WHAT REASON HAVE YOU TO DO SO?
...I DO NOT UNDERSTAND, MISTRESS.
PLEASE LOVE THEM, AND CARE FOR THEM.
YOU MUST BECOME THE RINGMASTER OF THE MIDNIGHT CIRCUS, AND CONTINUE TRAVELING WITH THEM.
BUT IF YOU LEAVE US, MISTRESS, THE OTHER DOLLS WILL BE MOST DISTRESSED. THEY WILL HAVE NO REASON TO GO ON.
THAT IS WHY YOU SHALL TAKE MY PLACE FROM THIS DAY FORTH.

YES... AUTOMATA ARE BUILT SO AS TO BE INCAPABLE OF AIDING ME IN ANY SUCH ACT.
BUT HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO "EXTINGUISH" YOURSELF?
...I MOST CERTAINLY SHALL.
I HAVE LEARNED SOMETHING THROUGH OUR LONG BATTLE WITH THE SHIROGANE.
THEN... YOU CAN'T MEAN...
BUT ... SHIROGANE ARE NOT...
THEY WILL BE QUITE HAPPY TO DISMANTLE AND EXTINGUISH ME.
IF I SEEK OUT THESE HUMANS, WHO HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE STRUCTURES AND WEAKNESSES OF THE AUTOMATA...
ALL OF THE MARIONETTES USED BY THE SHIROGANE...
ARE PRODUCED BY A GROUP OF PUPPET-BUILDERS IN THE ORIENT.
トト
...I SEE. SO YOU WOULD PREFER TO LEAVE IT TO THEM, RATHER THAN BE TORN TO BITS BY SOME SHIROGANE'S MARIONETTE...

BUT...
I WAS NOT ABLE TO UNDERSTAND LADY FRANCINE'S FEELINGS.
IF I DO, THEN I MAY PERHAPS COME TO UNDERSTAND THE HEART OF MY CREATOR...
THESE HUMANS WHO BUILD PUPPETS.
THE REASON IS MORE THAT I WISH TO MEET THEM...
YOU MAY RELY UPON ME COMPLETELY.
AND SO, I BID HER FAREWELL.
NOW THEN... I LEAVE IT TO YOU.
LADY FRANCINE DEPARTED WITHOUT LOOKING BACK...
OUTSIDE WAS A STORMY SEA.

BECAME FRANCINE.
AND I...

IT IS ...
MOST UN-FOR-TU-NATE ...

EVEN IF I BEAT YOU, ZONAPHA SYNDROME WON'T GO AWAY, WILL IT...?
ZO-NAPHA SYN-DROME ...

BUT I...
AM NOT THE ONE YOU SEEK.

WHERE... WHERE DID SHE GO?
THE REAL LADY FRANCINE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS THE METHOD OF STOPPING THE INSECTS THAT SPREAD IT.
THAT IS CORRECT.
HEY! WHERE DID FRANCINE GO?
IF EVER A SHIROGANE STANDS BEFORE YOU WHO HAS DEFEATED LES QUATRE PIONNIERS ...
THE LAST THING THAT LADY FRANCINE TOLD ME WAS THIS.

HEY! ANSWER ME!
AND AT THAT TIME, YOUR ACTIONS SHALL CEASE PERMANENTLY ...
AT THAT TIME, YOUR DUTY HAS COME TO AN END.

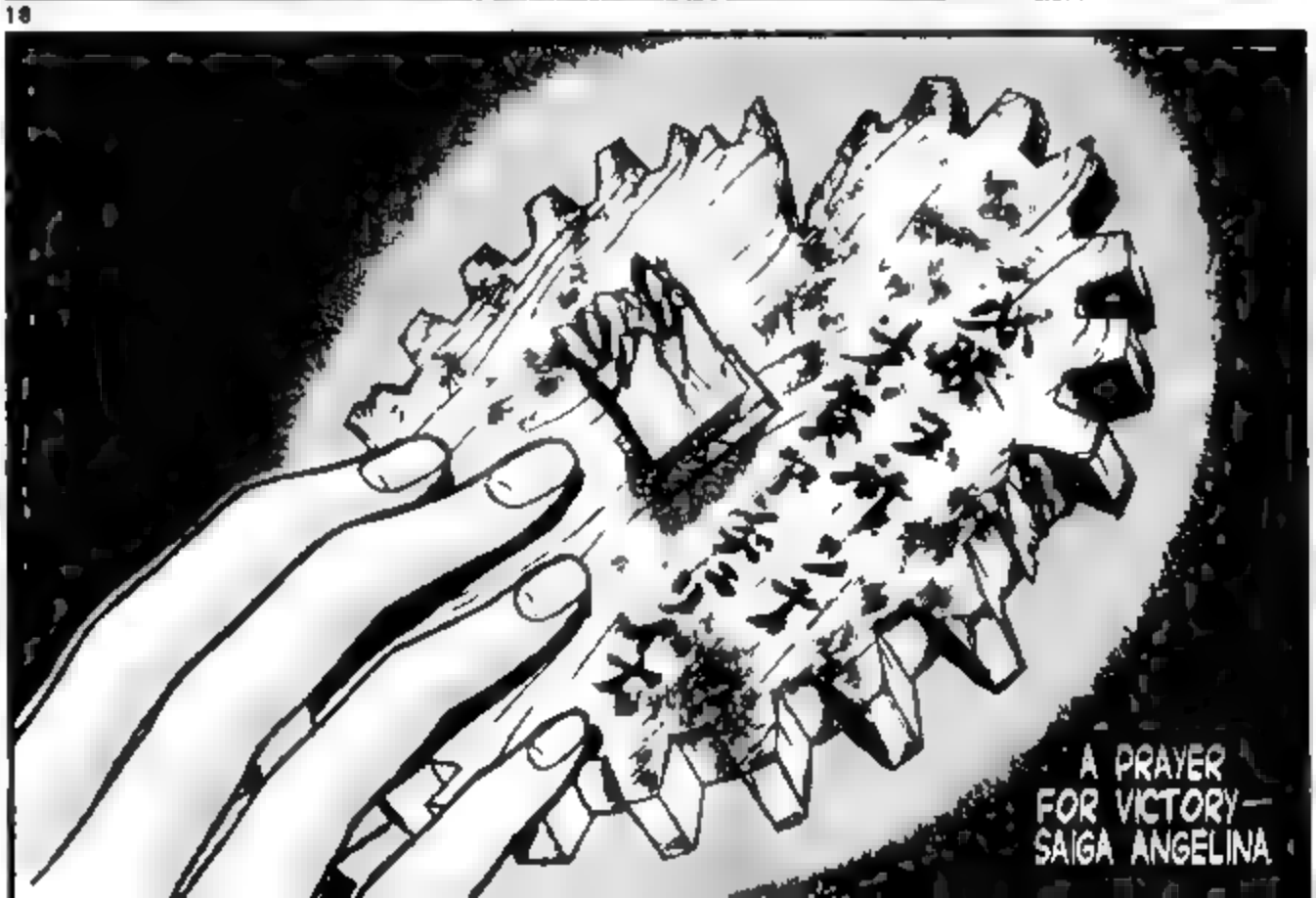
14 SFX: KLIK KLIK KLIK

NEI-
THER
I...
NOR
LADY
FRAN-
CINE...
WERE
EVER...
ABLE TO
IMITATE
YOU...
LAUGH-
TER AND
SMILES
...
SFX: KLIK KLIK
H-
HEY
...!
HAS
MADE
MY BODY
AND MY
MIND...
SO VERY
SLOW...
TRAVELING
WITH THE
DOLLS...
WHO TRY
TO MAKE
ME SMILE
...
THOUGH
WE COULD
NEVER...
BE HUMAN
...
SFX: KLK KLK WHIRRR
WHERE
IS
FRAN-
CINE
?!
NA...
RU...
MI.
FARE
...
WELL
...
AND
SO...
I AM...
HAPPY
THAT...
THIS
DAY...
HAS
COME.
I
TOO...
HAVE
GROWN...
TIRED.

SFX: KLI—

LUCILLE ...!!
TOR, TIMBAVATI ...
FACELESS, TELL ME... DMITRI, DAHL...

18


A PRAYER FOR VICTORY— SAIGA ANGELINA

Ending Bonus

Will you take a peek at just a few examples?

I want to draw everywhere, all the time.

My drawing bug isn't just limited to work.

Katou Narumi

加ウナルミ

Lucille Verneuil

ルシール ベルヌイユ

スケッチブックに
筆ペンとボールペンで
Done in sketchbook with fude brush pen and ballpoint pen

Liáng Míngxiá

Done in notebook
with fine-liner pen
and ballpoint pen

ペラペラの紙に つけ ペン で

Done on tracing paper with fine-liner pen トレーシングペーパーに ミリペンで

That's all.
おしまい.

See you in volume 22!
22巻(かん)で おあいしましょう!

トイレットペーパーに 血(ち)で…… (カリよ)
Done on toilet paper in blood... (just kidding)

からくりサーカス㉑

少年サンデーコミックス

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Thanks to Judash137 on the mangafox forums for removing the Japanese text, and to the anonymous person who tipped me off to that!

Any group with more experience or skill is welcome to take over at any time or to redo chapters I have already done if they are below the quality that this series deserves.